THE
CATHOLIC RADICAL

"...to foster a society based on creed instead of greed." Peter Maurin

October/November 2013 ***Price: For whatever it's worth.***

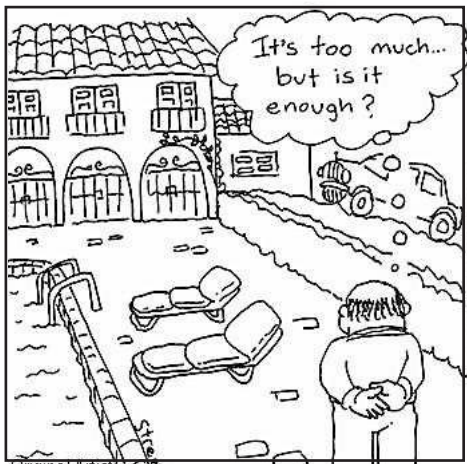
Good News for the Rich

by Scott Schaeffer-Duffy

There is good news for the rich. You are getting richer, despite the recession and sluggish recovery. The average salary for a CEO in the United States rose 37.4% since 2009, up $14.1 million. The value of an average stock on the New York Exchange rose 138% in the same period. The government continues to weaken labor and environmental regulations, allowing you to lower wages and production costs, and to increase profits. Although politicians talk of changing the arrangement, for the time being you can legally protect most of your wealth from taxation through off-shore banking. The blame-the-rich agitation of the Occupy Movement has largely blown over. Angry American voters are once again more likely to fault retirees, union members, immigrants, and the poor, more often than the rich, for what ails the United States.

But aren't the rich a tiny fraction of our population? Yes, it is true that the top 1% in the US controls 39 % of the world's wealth, but the top 25% is doing pretty well too. You probably don't think of yourselves as rich, but in measurable terms you are. Your income is over 400% of what 100 million Americans earn. You can afford comfortable housing, decent health care, higher education, and a pleasant vacation each year, perhaps overseas. You can pay $40 to see the Red Sox, $80 to watch the Patriots, and even, once in a while, $200 to see a band like the Rolling Stones. It's no big deal for you vacation on Martha's Vineyard or whale watch in Boston Harbor. Going to the movies at $25 a pop for a ticket and snacks is peanuts. Your family probably owns two or more vehicles. You might even have a small boat and a garage full of high-end bicycles. You can afford to join a health club. You have a lawn, backyard, and decent public or private schools for your children. You don't have a yacht or second house, but, compared to most Americans and an even higher percentage of people around the world, you are decidedly rich.

I know you are rich because I grew up



in a blue collar family that did not have and could not afford most of what you enjoy. I remember going on a field trip to the Boston Museum of Science when I was in third grade and seeing my classmates spend money in the gift shop like it was nothing. If the school had not paid the price of admission, I would not have been there at all. I paid for milk each day with three pennies. The "rich" kids had hot lunch for a quarter. My clothes were hand-me-downs or mail-ordered at Easter and the beginning of the school year, never bought new at Filene's or even Bradlees.

Of course, none of my experience comes close to privation. I never went hungry or suffered in the cold. My family did not vacation in hotels, but did go on camping trips. We drove to Montreal and to the Grand Canyon. We spent many

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Remembering Judy

by Claire Schaeffer-Duffy

Editor's Note: The following eulogy was given at a memorial service for Judy Brown Cahill, who died August 10th after years of living with an incurable disease. She was 53 years old.

I remember vividly the first time I met Judy Brown. It was the night before a mid-term exam in biology at the University of Virginia, where we both were freshman. I was in a huddle with students cramming for the next day's test. A sense of panic had descended on our circle as we realized that none of us really understood the unit on DNA strands.

"I think it means this...," began one student. Overhearing the explanation, Judy stepped into our circle. Shaking that magnificent mane of hers, she said in her inimitable Richmond accent, "No. *No*. It's not that." She then proceeded to rattle off the correct answer with the intensity of a defense attorney arguing a career-defining capital case. A stunned silence followed. My first thought was: "All that intensity for a DNA strand?" My second thought was: "I am joining *her* study group."

Judy and I lived together our second and third year of college with other intense women. During our senior year at UVa, when a number of us took off to study in Europe, Judy went to London to work and do independent research at a prison for adolescents.

She was my most fearless and generous friend. It was Judy who did overnight shifts with me, or rather I with her, at the battered women's shelter in Charlottesville. Such a formative experience for both of us. It was Judy who hitchhiked with me from

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Vol. 30, No. 2 October/November 2013

THE CATHOLIC RADICAL

Published by:
The Saints Francis & Thérèse Catholic Worker Community
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Founded in 1933, The Catholic Worker is a lay movement serving the poor while denouncing injustice and proclaiming peace. We are not tax exempt. We rely entirely on the generosity of our supporters to meet our expenses. We welcome volunteers, letters, poetry, articles, artwork, and donations.

Good News

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Saturdays at state beaches. We had a three-foot-deep above-ground pool, lots of pets, a pool table, car, and home. In global terms, we were still privileged, but in the context of the conspicuous spending around us, we were poor. I hated it.

The humiliation of not being able to buy things that others casually purchase is hard to imagine if you've never been through it yourself. Until I was 14, if anyone asked me what I wanted to be when I grew up, I would answer, "Rich.

I knew what wealth was because I had a rich friend named Henry. Like the top 25% of Americans today, he and his parents didn't consider themselves rich, but I had no doubts about it. They took me to restaurants, amusement parks, and the movies. Henry had a built-in pool with a diving board. His family had *butter* at every meal. His father, a car dealer, offered to give me a used car for my 16th birthday, a gift my father refused on my behalf. To say I envied Henry and his family would be an understatement.

But I gradually came to understand that all was not sunshine for my rich friend and his family. As his wealth accumulated, Henry's father gave up one blue collar joy after another. Chamber of Commerce meetings took the place of going "frogging" with friends (trapping the amphibians by night, skinning them, and roasting their legs). The swimming pool replaced the garden, where he loved to putter. The pressures of running a business gave him an ulcer, which prevented him from eating the Italian food he so enjoyed. Henry's father died without grandchildren or familial harmony.

Witnessing how money did not buy happiness opened my mind to the concept of voluntary poverty. I read biographies of Francis of Assisi and was intrigued with the saint's belief that "indescribable joy" could be achieved through renunciation of wealth. So enamored was Francis with self-denial that he envisioned it as a woman, Lady Poverty, with whom he had fallen deeply in love.

Dan Mauk

Before his holiness was widely proclaimed, Francis spent the night at the home of a wealthy friend named Bernard of Quintavalle. Even though Francis came from an up-and-coming merchant family, he had many friends from the nobility like Bernard. In early April, 1209, Bernard discovered Francis in the middle of the night, kneeling on the stone floor with his arms outstretched, praying, "My God and my all!" The obvious joy on Francis' face moved Bernard to give away all his possessions and become Francis' first follower.

Although we tend to identify the New Testament as good news for the poor, a document where "**the hungry are filled with good things, and the rich are sent away empty**" (Luke 1:23), Francis knew from experience that Christ brought good news to the rich as well. Unfortunately, from the parable of Lazarus and Dives (Luke 16) to the Rich Fool (Luke 12), many Scriptural appeals to the rich are underscored with threats of eternal punishment rather than promises of temporal as well as eternal joy.

Too often, those of us in the Catholic Worker movement, who espouse voluntary poverty, overplay the deprivation of our situations, unconsciously reinforcing rather than unravelling the misconception that greater happiness is found in wealth. All too often we employ guilt as a motivator for generosity, a tactic which befouls the good news our rich brothers and sisters deserve to hear.

Helping the poor is not about accumulating moral capital to get us into heaven. Helping those in need is about immersing ourselves in the love that God lavishes on humanity. Even to graze the edges of that love is to feel Francis' "perfect joy." Wealth is not only wrong because others don't have what they need, but because it confuses us into thinking it is the source of our happiness. And while there is no doubt that a glass of champagne on a tropical beach is pleasurable, it pales in comparison to the contentment that Francis enjoyed. *La dolce vita* also provides less and less satisfaction over time, while self-denial builds in intensity until an individual becomes so full of love that he or she can joyfully give their very life for another. To be so full of love is heaven on earth, not pie in the sky. It is to be self-actualized. It is the pearl of great price. When we find that treasure, it is as nothing to sell everything we own to buy it. This is surely good news for the rich and for all of us. Ω

Judy

(Continued from Page 1)

Charlottesville to Washington, DC, the two of us emerging from a VW bug, giggling nervously and grateful to be alive, because we had realized, only after the car was barreling down the highway, that our driver was high as a kite. It was Judy who hosted me when a massive London snowstorm shutdown Heathrow Airport, delaying my flight to Nigeria for several days. It was Judy who took me in when fire consumed the triple-decker that housed our fledgling Saints Francis and Thérèse Catholic Worker community. And it was Judy, my fervently Protestant friend, who introduced me to the Catholic Worker movement.

I can still see her curled up in the chair of our UVa apartment on a November evening in 1980, poring over a lengthy obituary in *The Washington Post*.

"Dorothy Day died," she announced.

"Who is that?" I asked.

"*You* don't know who Dorothy Day is?" And so began my education into a way of understanding one's faith, a way of living that continues to this day. It was Judy who first opened that door.

"What is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious life?" concludes Mary Oliver's poem, "The Summer Day." Judy Brown Cahill did a lot. By age 19, she had already spent a summer with Mitch Snyder and the Community for Creative Nonviolence (CCNV) feeding and sheltering the homeless in Washington, DC At the time, there were as many as 2,000 people sleeping on the grates and in the doorways of our nation's capital. It was CCNV, with people like Judy, who were calling attention to this scandal.

At UVa, where she received a degree in English with a minor in Psychology, her writing and poetry drew accolades from poet Greg Orr, her teacher.

Our life's plan was to start our own shelter for battered women, but first, we would spend a year living in different communities to see how others were doing it. Judy went off to the Los Angeles Catholic Worker, and I stayed in Washington, DC where I met my husband. Eventually, the two of us southern women found ourselves living among Yankees in New England, where fall is spectacular and spring takes so long to come.

While I was having children, Judy was working with women and children. She served as director of Friendly House here in Worcester at a time when [the shelter] did not have a permanent space. She and staff were pulling out cots every night and stuffing them in closets come morning. "I help people find housing," Judy told Worcester's daily newspaper, *The Telegram and Gazette*.

But Judy did much more than that. It was while she was director of Friendly House, just 27 years old, that she procured $200,000 in state grants, enabling Friendly House to get a permanent location. For this, she received the Friends of the

Homeless Award, sharing the podium that year with Kitty Dukakis and others whom Judy described as "some real biggies."

Judy went on to work as a clinical supervisor at the Homeless Outreach Advocacy Program and then returned to Richmond to pursue her masters in Social Work. She came back to Worcester in 1991 and for the next thirteen years worked as director of several shelters and then as the Director of Women's Recovery Services, developing and overseeing a continuum of care for women in recovery from substance abuse....

Judy received numerous awards for her work. She received the 2001 Hometown Hero Award from *Worcester Magazine*, the 2003 Woman of Consequence Award from the Massachusetts legislature, and that same year was given the Janice Nadeau Community Service Award. While Judy appreciated the recognition, it was never her primary motivation.

She was a woman of profound partialities, intense in all things, including the card-game UNO. And I loved her for her intensity and her inclinations. She was partial to progressive causes, partial to the ways of peacemaking, and throughout all the years I have known her, Judy was most consistently and undeniably partial to the poor and marginalized, especially poor women and children.... Professional in her expertise, formidable in her knowledge, she was empathetic without being naive.

Most importantly, Judy regarded poor women and children as if they mattered, *really* mattered. She did not believe in a remote Christ, but in a Jesus Who is deeply invested in all our doin's. Judy thought the best way to express such a faith was in what we valued. At the end of an article for *The Catholic Agitator* in which she gives a blistering summary of Reaganomics, enumerating its costs for women and children, Judy, then only 22, wrote:

"*The fact that battleships, capital gain, and material consumption have superceded our commitment to providing adequate care for women and children is indicative of a society that has lost reverence for life itself.*

We are a society that robs the elderly of their dignity, that penalizes a woman for her generative nurturing, and denies the needs of poor children. Because they cannot pay, because they cannot justify their worth, somehow we have forgotten that each child is a gift of hope, a life that offers unique possibilities — and women, the carriers of life, are the sufferers of a harshness that threatens us all."

Judy expressed her belief in a social ordering—one in which poor women and children were cherished—most intimately when she and her husband Michael adopted Bobbi Su.

The generosity Judy showed me throughout her life continued even in her hectic dying. In those early hours, when she still had strength to speak, she wanted to be sure I had funds to replace our broken stove at the Catholic Worker. She told me to take the kale seeds she had just ordered for an autumn planting. And the canning pot. "It's new," she said.

What is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious life? Judy Brown Cahill did a lot. A whole lot. And for this, we must give God thanks. Ω

The Early Church on the Military

"A soldier of the civil authority must be taught not to kill men and to refuse to do so if he is commanded, and to refuse to take an oath; if he is unwilling to comply, he must be rejected… If a catechumen or a believer seeks to become a soldier, they must be rejected, for they have despised God."

—**Saint Hippolytus** (170-235)

"We no longer take up 'sword against nation,' nor do we 'learn war anymore,' having become children of peace, for the sake of Jesus, who is our leader, instead of those whom our fathers followed."

—**Origen** (182-254)

"Wars are scattered all over the earth with the bloody horror of camps. The whole world is wet with mutual blood. And murder–which is admitted to be a crime in the case of an individual–is called a virtue when it is committed wholesale. Impunity is claimed for the wicked deeds, not because they are guiltless, but because the cruelty is perpetrated on a grand scale!"

—**Saint Cyprian of Carthage** (died 300)

"We who formerly used to murder one another do not only now refrain from making war upon our enemies, but also, that we may not lie nor deceive our examiners, willingly die confessing Christ."

— **Saint Justin Martyr** (100-165)

"But now inquiry is made about this point, whether a believer may turn himself unto military service, and whether the military may be admitted unto the faith, even the rank and file, or each inferior grade, to whom there is no necessity for taking part in sacrifices or capital punishments. There is no agreement between the divine and the human sacrament, the standard of Christ and the standard of the devil, the camp of light and the camp of darkness. One soul cannot be due to two masters— God and Caesar."

"Shall it be held lawful to make an occupation of the sword, when the Lord proclaims that he who uses the sword shall perish by the sword? And shall the son of peace take part in the battle when it does not become him even to sue at law?... I banish from us the military life…"

—**Tertullian** (160-220)

ST. MARTIN OF TOURS

Ade Bethune

"Hitherto I have served you as a soldier; allow me now to become a soldier to God. Let the man who is to serve you receive your donatives. I am the soldier of Christ; it is not lawful for me to fight."

—**Saint Martin of Tours** (316-397)

"We have rejected such spectacles as the Coliseum. How then, when we do not even look on killing lest we should contract guilt and pollution, can we put people to death?"

—**Saint Athenagoras** (133-190)

"The soldiers of Christ require neither arms nor spears of iron."

"The servants of God do not rely for their protection on material defenses but on the divine Providence."

—**Saint Ambrose** (338-397)

"Christians have changed their swords and their lances into instruments of peace, and they know not now how to fight."

—**Saint Iranaeus** (130-200)

"I threw down my arms for it was not seemly that a Christian man, who renders military service to the Lord Christ, should render it by earthly injuries."

"It is not lawful for a Christian to bear arms for any earthly consideration."

—**Saint Marcellus Martyr** (died 298)

"Whatever Christians would not wish others to do to them, they do not to others. And they comfort their oppressors and make them their friends; they do good to their enemies…. Through love towards their oppressors, they persuade them to become Christians."

—**Saint Aristides** (early 2nd century)

"There is nothing better than peace, in which all warfare of things in heaven and things on earth is abolished."

—**Saint Ignatius of Antioch** (died between 98-117)

"We would rather shed our own blood than stain our hands and our conscience with that of another. As a result, an ungrateful world is now enjoying–and for a long period has enjoyed–a benefit from Christ. For by his means, the rage of savage ferocity has been softened and has begun to withhold hostile hands from the blood of a fellow creature. In fact, if all men without exception…would lend an ear for a while to his salutary and peaceful rules,…the whole world would be living in the most peaceful tranquility. The world would have turned the use of steel into more peaceful uses and would unite together in blessed harmony."

—**Arnobius** (d.330)

The Early Church on Wealth

"You are not making a gift of your possession to the poor person. You are handing over to him what is his."

"The poor man seeks money and has it not; a man asks for bread, and your horse champs gold under his teeth. And precious ornaments delight you, although others do not have grain…. The people are starving, and you close your barns; the people weep bitterly, and you toy with jewelled ring…. The jewel in your ring could preserve the lives of the whole people…."

— **Saint Ambrose of Milan** (340-397)

"The property of the wealthy holds them in chains... which shackle their courage and choke their faith and hamper their judgment and throttle their souls. They think of themselves as owners, whereas it is they rather who are owned: enslaved as they are to their own property, they are not the masters of their money but its slaves."

— **Saint Cyprian of Carthage** (died 300)

"The bread in your cupboard belongs to the hungry man; the coat hanging in your closet belongs to the man who needs it; the shoes rotting in your closet belong to the man who has no shoes; the money which you put into the bank belongs to the poor. You do wrong to everyone you could help but fail to help."

"If you scatter your wealth, God will receive you, angels extol you, all people from the creation of the world will bless you. Your glory will be eternal; you will inherit the crown of righteousness and the Kingdom of Heaven. All these things will be your reward for your stewardship of perishable things."

— **Saint Basil the Great** (330-370)

"Share everything with your brother. Do not say, 'It is private property.' If you share what is everlasting, you should be that much more willing to share things which do not last."

—**The Didache** (late 1st century)

"Instead of the tithes which the law commanded, the Lord said to divide everything we have with the poor. And he said to love not only our neighbors but also our enemies, and to be givers and sharers not only with the good but also to be liberal givers toward those who take away our possessions."

— **Saint Irenaeus** (130-200)

Ade Bethune

"The rich are in possession of the goods of the poor, even if they have acquired them honestly or inherited them legally."

"Not to enable the poor to share in our goods is to steal from them and deprive them of life. The goods we possess are not ours but theirs."

"When you are weary of praying and do not receive, consider how often you have heard a poor man calling, and have not listened to him."

— **Saint John Chrysostom** (347-407)

"Let the strong take care of the weak; let the weak respect the strong. Let the rich man minister to the poor man; let the poor man give thanks to God that he gave him one through whom his need might be satisfied."

— **Saint Clement of Rome** (1st century)

"Christians love one another. They do not overlook the widow, and they save the orphan. The one who has, ministers ungrudgingly to the one who does not have. When they see a stranger, they take him under their own roof and rejoice over him as a true brother, for they do not call themselves brothers according to the flesh but according to the soul."

— **Saint Aristides of Athens** (early 2nd century)

"How can I make you realize the misery of the poor? How can I make you understand that your wealth comes from their weeping?"

—**Saint Basil the Great** (330-370)

"Those who wish to make room for the Lord must find pleasure not in private, but in common property…. Redouble your charity. For, on account of the things which each one of us possesses singly, wars exist, hatreds, discords, strifes among human beings, tumults, dissensions, scandals, sins, injustices, and murders. On what account? On account of those things which each of us possesses singly. Do we fight over the things we possess in common? We inhale this air in common with others, we see the sun in common. Blessed therefore are those who make room for the Lord, so as not to take pleasure in private property. Let us therefore abstain from private property—or from the love of it, if we cannot abstain from possession—and let us make room for the Lord."

—**Saint Augustine** (354–430)

Broke Yet Rich

by Scott Schaeffer-Duffy

We need your help! Earlier this week, a big red exclamation point appeared on the screen of our 2003 Prius telling me to go immediately to the dealer, who in turn told me that the car urgently needed a $6,000 repair or it would suddenly die. Since our car has almost 190,000 miles and quite a few bruises from hit-and-run accidents, the dealer says the repair exceeds the value of the car. The next day, $200 was stolen from my desk (a first in the history of our house). The day after that, we received an unexpected $670 bill. And then, to add insult to injury, I discovered yesterday that someone had stolen the antenna off our van.

Unfortunately, these hurdles came just before the printing and mailing of this newsletter, which always sets us back $1,700. By the time you read this, those bills will be at the bottom of a growing pile.

The last time we needed another car, we had the luxury of fund-raising for the better part of a year and then bought the Prius. Even at ten years old, it still got 49 miles per gallon of gas. For the moment, we are limping along with our 15-year-old van, which gets only 15 miles per gallon and is really just a pile of rust on wheels. It is not long for this world.

Financial hits like these are body blows which knock the wind out of us, especially after we begged three years ago for funds to replace our heating system, and last year to rewire our house (a project that is still only half finished). We realize that these are hard economic times for most of our readers. The need for another car, which will do as little damage to the earth as the Prius did, overwhelms us.

On a long day when our house is filled with guests and we are extra busy organizing vigils to promote peace in Syria, part of me is jealous of the top 1% who make more than enough money in minutes to pay all our bills and buy us a 69-mile-a-gallon new Prius. Part of me wishes that I could sell my labor at a scandalously high price, so I could pay bills without asking anyone for help.

Patricia and May at a vigil for peace in Syria

But that's just one side of my feelings. Last night, Claire and I sat outside, around a fire, with our daughter Grace, son Justin, daughter-in-law Patricia, and granddaughter May. We ogled the baby, talked, and laughed. Today, Justin, Patricia, May, Grace, Claire, and I met up with our son Aiden at a vigil to remove ROTC from Holy Cross, where Aiden is a freshman. I took many more photos of my happy family than I did of the protest. Claire and I spent last Sunday at Harvard with our son Patrick, who is a senior this year. That visit too was wonderful.

When I got up this morning, long before the sun, to go to our bakery, I stepped outside and saw a clear starry sky featuring Orien's Belt. As a child, I always took a sighting of this constellation (the only one, save the Big Dipper, which I could identify) as a sign of hope, joy, and love. Although I was tired and had no idea how to dispel the bills, I felt wealthy. I knew I would never choose a big bank account over a happy and healthy family.

Albert Camus said, "I know of only one duty, and that is to love." And so, I am putting our material needs before you, and trying to let go of worry, so I can be a loving husband, father, grandfather, and member of this Catholic Worker community. After almost thirty years in this movement, I should know by now that God will not ask us to do work and then fail to give us the tools we need to accomplish it.

And so, there you have it. Maybe God will send an angel to give us a hybrid car. Maybe God wants us to find a way to run our house and bakery without a vehicle. In any event, I have so much more to be grateful for than to complain about, so why worry? Ω

On Pilgrimage

(September 1949)

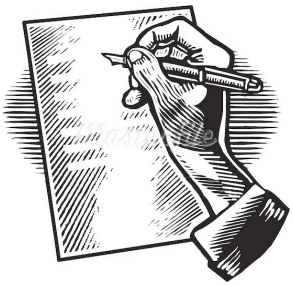
by Dorothy Day

On various feasts I have rather timidly asked Saint Anthony, Saint Joseph, the Blessed Mother, and today Saint Rose, to please move someone's heart to send us a sizable gift, that would get rid of some of our bills, so that we could breathe easier, take courage, gird our loins for the ever increasing struggle. Just a little reminder that the saints are with us. Maybe they want us to groan in our poverty. Maybe they want us to feel the same heavy, almost hopeless burden that the family does these days as bills pile up, doctor's bills, hospital bills, grocery bills, so that you never get out from under, you never draw a free breath but are always scheming and planning and wondering how to make ends meet....

"Sow, and you will reap," Father Roy used to say. "If you are saving to pay a mortgage on the Church or school, and had only five hundred or five thousand in the bank, get rid of it all, sow it all, and you will be rewarded a hundred fold. God has promised it. It sounds foolish, but if you need money, sow money. It will come back to you. Cast your bread on the waters."

So we sow all the time, whatever we have, and we beg our readers to do the same. Perhaps some reader will look at our broad fields here at Maryfarm and decide to sow a few houses on it, to take care of the few families, and what mansions in heaven they will receive in exchange! Ω

Letters



The latest *National Catholic Reporter* (September 13-26) has a front-page piece about the 43rd anniversary of the CW house in Los Angeles named for Ammon Hennacy. During the 50's, while I was a missionary in Utah, Ammon came to visit me. I was one of two subscribers to *The Catholic Worker* in Utah at the time. We hit it off, so he came back and then decided to stay. He was in the city and I was out in the country, but I would visit him from time to time at Joe Hill House. After five years in Utah, I volunteered for work in Bolivia. When I visited the bishop to say "Good-bye," he said to me: "John I have one favor to ask you. Please take Ammon Hennacy with you. He gives me a head-ache."

God bless all the prophets who give head-aches to bishops.

And God bless you and all CW folk,

Rev. John Doyle
Framingham, Massachusetts

Dear Claire,
How great that you could take part in the 2013 Fletcher Summer Institute.

Your "Studying People Power" article was a much needed ray of hope — actually many rays — for our country at a time where hope seems to be in short supply.

I found it interesting that the struggles you wrote of and the James Lawson award winners you named were all from beyond these shores. Intended or not, it's a great reminder of how much we have to learn from our brothers and sisters all around the world.

Paul and Katja Rehm
Greenville, New York

Hi Everyone,
Thanks for the latest *Radical*. I really enjoyed (Pope Francis') "A Culture of Encounter." Next week, at the prison where I volunteer, we have a theme of "goodness." I was struggling with the "holier than thou" sort of flavor to the theme and had been praying about a more real take on "goodness." I think I'll use some ideas from this article.

...Lucky you, Claire, to be at such a highly-charged conference on nonviolent direct action. Some **very** brave people there by the sounds of it. The statistics of non-violent resistance being twice as effective as violent resistance is **so** encouraging.

Kurt's story truly is remarkable. I love the phrase "choose life." It's been a mantra for me when I battle depression — and what's left me depressed is paltry compared to what many in the world face, including Kurt....

Keep shining the light.

Sheri Ellery
Opononi, New Zealand

Dear Claire and Scott,
Thanks so much for your August/September *Catholic Radical*. From the homily of Pope Francis on the front page to the stories of Kurt and May Kathryn, aka Scotti May, on the back, it is an issue glowing with hope, love, and courage.

Jeannie Shaterian
California

Dear Claire and Scott,
I am uplifted by the August/September issue of *The Catholic Radical*. Reading about the freedom fighters attending the 2013 Fletcher Summer Institute was thrilling. It reminded me of Emily Dickinson. " I dwell in Possibility/ A fairer House than Prose." We need possibilities to breathe. And we need stories.

Scott's story of Kurt and his army translator, kidnapped and tortured by Sunni insurgents, was sad and awful. It is a tribute to your way of life that he found his way to Mason Street and you helped him out.

Congratulations on the birth of May Kathryn Duffy!

Jay O'Callahan
Marshfield, Massachusetts

Catholic Worker Calendar

Wednesday, October 2 & 16, November 13 — Mass or Evening Prayer: Please join us in prayer and song on Mason Street at 7:30 P.M. Ice cream, coffee cake, or other treats to follow.

Michael Cahill, Geri Dinardo, Abigail Hannaford-Ricardi, and Robert Peters vigil for peace

Wednesday, October 9 — *The Ghosts of Jeju*: Please join us for the Worcester premiere of Regis Tremblay's documentary on the campaign to stop construction of a naval base on the South Korean island of Jeju. Q&A with the film-maker to follow along with refreshments. 7 P.M. 52 Mason Street.

Wednesday, October 23 — Rosalie Riegle: Please come hear the award-winning oral historian speak on her two new books about nonviolent resisters, **Crossing the Line** and **Doing Time for Peace.** Refreshments to follow. 7 P.M. 52 Mason Street.

Wednesday, November 6 — The Road from Damascus, *Syrian Stories of Love and War*: Please come hear peacemaker Octavia Taylor, who lived in Syria for ten months in 2009 and 2010, speak on the country, its people, and current war. Refreshments to follow. 7 P.M. 52 Mason Street.

Mason Street Musings

On the question of suffering Jesus was once asked, "**Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind? Jesus answered, 'Neither he nor his parents sinned; it is so that the works of God might be made visible through him.**" (Jn. 9:2,3)

One such sufferer we welcomed at the house, I shall call him "L," had never before been homeless. He arrived from out of state and was in limbo for housing and medical benefits. L is rather tall, and thin by choice — for he eats only one meal a day — and not being a vegetarian, well, he ate even less at our common meals. Also, unlike many of our guests, L had no addictions. As with most of our guests, we discovered more about him as time passed. L came from a family of 19 children. Of nine boys, he and six others were gay. He shared with us that his mother was never a "Mrs.," but was nevertheless, a "Madam." You see, she was a prostitute, and her 19 children were the result of multiple fathers. Eventually the State deemed her an unfit mother, and L was sent to an institution on Cape Cod at age seven.

L didn't like it, for he experienced there what he had experienced at home – rape. Not only had L been raped by various boyfriends and "Johns" of her mother, but later by older boys at the state-run institution, and by social workers there. Eventually, two other boys burned the place down! Good, you might think. Think again. From age sixteen until eighteen L was placed in 14 foster homes, where six of the "fathers" also raped him.

Not surprisingly, even though he has

Sarah Giaimo

no metal impairments, L only achieved a third-grade education. You sense this when you listen to him talk and read his writing. When he was finally allowed to leave foster care in the late '70's, he began working as a "bell boy in Boston." Which hotel? I asked. No hotel, he replied, and described what would be more accurately described as a "call boy." L had entered the family trade.

By his early twenties, however, he met a "friend," who helped him to pay his bills and deal with "paperwork." This friend was by trade a "collector" for the Mafia. Hollywood could not write a better script! This friend died several months ago, at which point, because of concern for Mafia-related reprisals, the authorities helped L adopt several aliases. L, being diagnosed as clinically "dependent," was helpless. So he moved here, where we welcomed this new stranger. Miraculously, L never acquired the HIV virus, but, tragically discovered recently that he has stage-three leukemia.

You might well imagine that someone who has suffered so much would be bitter, but L was actually a joy, very polite, and kind to the other guests. Despite the cruelty he endured, L still regards himself as a faithful Catholic. After only a few days with us, L said he felt like he was in heaven. Three weeks later, he moved into a subsidized apartment. He left a thank you card and note saying we were "angels sent from God."

Thanks to continued support from readers like you, the "**works of God are made visible**" to us through the goodness of people like L and to him through the works of mercy. **Robert**

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